

**Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee
Thursday, March 3, 2022**

**Senate Bill 21: An Act Concerning A State-Wide Property Tax on Certain Residential Real Property -
Support**

**Senate Bill 28: An Act Establishing a Capital Gains Surcharge - Support
Senate Bill 29: An Act Concerning the Earned Income Tax Credit - Support**

Senator Fonfara, Representative Scanlon, Senator Martin, Representative Cheeseman, and members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee:

My name is Travis Woodward, I am a resident of Hamden, and an engineer in the Connecticut Department of Transportation. I am also the president of CSEA SEIU Local 2001, a labor union representing over 23,000 state, municipal, board of education, active and retired, public and private sector workers. CSEA is also a proud member of the Recovery for All coalition. I offer the following testimony in support of Senate Bills 21, 28, and 29:

People throughout Connecticut - regardless of our race, gender, how much we make, or where we live - have pulled together to try to navigate the pandemic and the financial turmoil it has brought to too many households. Now, as the virus, hopefully, recedes and with our State's coffers full, it's time to provide relief to all working people and especially our most vulnerable residents. This relief should be more than a one-time, election year tax cut. Now is the time to put working people first while rebuilding and investing in our public services. Connecticut must deliver needed and immediate assistance, and strengthen our communities for the long-term by enacting policies that put us on the path to eliminate the disparities that allow inequality to flourish. No one in Connecticut, the wealthiest state in the wealthiest country, should be forced to live with the anxiety, stress, and feelings of helplessness that often are created when all you can do is focus on survival.

CSEA members have been hard at work during the pandemic. From paraeducators in our public schools to the staff in secure facilities like state prisons or the Southbury Training School to people like me working to improve our transportation infrastructure, we have continued to do what we do best: serve the public. But that service has come with real and lasting sacrifice as we have seen members infected with COVID, members who have lost loved ones because of the virus, and members who have lost wages due to illness or mandated quarantine.

As proud as I am of the incredible work done by CSEA members and other working people over the course of the past two years, the virus made clear something we have known for a long time: Connecticut's public services are dangerously short staffed and underfunded and we have a tax and economic system that, not only, prioritizes the ultra-wealthy, but appears to punish those who work for a paycheck.

Senate Bill 29 would provide immediate and permanent relief to those who need it most. It should be coupled with a child tax credit to help bring working families out of poverty and give them a fighting chance to make ends meet, provide for their children, and save for a rainy day.

Senate Bills 21 and 28 ask high income earners to share the responsibility of building a strong economy. They are important, common sense measures, but we should also raise marginal rates on households with incomes over \$1,000,000. That level of contribution will go a long way to revitalizing and expanding programs and services that build equity. It would create a vibrant Connecticut where everyone can thrive.

As important as those three bills are, we should also be asking mega-profitable corporations to do a little more at this critical juncture in our state's and nation's history. Increasing the current corporate income tax surcharge from 10% to 20% and increasing the business tax on corporations whose gross income is \$100 million or greater from 7.5% to 11.5%, would generate between \$250 million to \$300 million. Tech behemoths like Google, Facebook, and Amazon maximize their profits by surveilling, collecting, and reselling user data to target online advertising. A 10% tax on digital advertising on any company with income over \$10 billion would generate approximately \$140 million annually. Connecticut can be friendly to industry without shortchanging the people who have lived here for generations.

I urge the Committee to support Senate Bills 21, 28, and 29. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Travis Woodward
President, CSEA SEIU Local 2001